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Farm Broadcasters Letter



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Letter No. 2255

March 27, 1986

SIGNUP PERIOD EXTENDED

Farmers will have until April 25 to signup for the 1986 wheat, feed grain, cotton and rice programs. Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng said the extension from the original April 11 deadline was made to give producers more time to consider recent program changes.

HEPTACHLOR UPDATE

Is heptachlor a problem in meat, especially in the three states where the pesticide was found in dairy products? Yes and No. Yes, because a U.S. Department of Agriculture initial testing program found residue in 6 samples out of 196 tested. No, because the 6 samples were all from animals from within the three states and none from outside Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri. "There appears to be no widespread problem with heptachlor contamination of the meat supply," is the way Donald Houston, head of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service put it.

DAIRY FARMERS WITH HEPTACHLOR

Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng said the USDA's credit programs will move quickly to help dairy farmers facing substantial losses due to heptachlor-contaminated grain. The Farmers Home Admin. will make loans to its dairy-farm borrowers in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Missouri so operators can buy feed and, in some cases, replace dairy cattle that must be sold or destroyed. Dairy farmers seeking financial help should contact their county Farmers Home Admin. office.

5 PCT. PAID DIVERSION FOR WINTER WHEAT

Winter wheat producers will be offered an optional 5 pct. paid land diversion for their 1986 crop, according to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng. Under this new program provision, winter wheat producers will have the option of diverting from production 5 pct. of their wheat acreage base. Producers will still be allowed the current option of diverting 10 pct. of their base. The payment rate for diverted acreage will remain \$2.00 per bushel.

WIND EROSION DOWN

Wind erosion in the Great Plains during the four-month period ending Feb. 28 was nearly 20 pct. lower than in the comparable period a year earlier, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Reports from the 10-state area showed slightly more than 3.3 million wind-damaged acres from Nov. 1, 1985, through Feb. 28, 1986. The total was a little under the 4 million wind-damaged acres in the comparable period in 1984-85.

HOGS & PIGS
INVENTORY
DOWN

Inventory of all hogs and pigs on March 1, 1986, in the 10 States conducting quarterly hog surveys is estimated at 38.6 million head, 3 pct. below last March 1, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is 4 pct. below March 1, 1984, and the lowest Mar. 1 inventory since 1976. (For more statistical information, call 202-447-6880.)

ACID RAIN
COOPERATION

The United States and the Federal Republic of Germany on Mar. 21 agreed to continue their scientific and technical cooperation on acid rain and other topics related to agriculture, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These cooperative efforts foster better understanding of problems common to both the U.S. and West Germany, and save both nations research time and funds.

MORE FARM PROGRAM
DETAILS: PROGRAM
PAYMENTS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture clarified some details of the 1986 upland cotton, feed grain, rice and wheat programs. The Food Security Improvements Act of 1986 authorizes additional compensation to be made available in the form of commodity certificates to producers whose 1986 farm program payment yield for a crop is reduced more than 3 pct. below the 1985 program payment yield. When calculating program payments, the same yield will be used for both deficiency and diversion payments when appropriate.

BREATHALYZER
TEST FOR
PEANUTS

A new test developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture can declare a peanut containing too much alcohol as intoxicated. And it's not the peanut's fault. If peanuts are exposed to severe cold or heat before they're cured, they produce alcohol and related compounds that give them a bitter flavor. The new test uses a special sensor and meter to measure how drunk the peanuts are. The bad-tasting ones are then separated from the sober ones. The peanuts with bad taste can still be used to make oil and other products.

MORE PINK
BOLLWORM
REGULATION

Parts of eight Arkansas and Mississippi counties were placed under Federal regulation to control pink bollworm, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Certain items are not permitted to move interstate from these areas unless treated, if necessary, and certified free of pink bollworm. Items include cottonseed, cotton lint and linters, used cotton bagging and used harvesting equipment. These actions published in the Federal Register on Mar. 25. Send written comments until May 27 to Thomas Gessel, USDA, APHIS, Room 728, Federal Bldg., Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

NEW RULES FOR
PIGGY'S FOOD
PREPARATION SITE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed to cancel licenses of inactive facilities for treating garbage fed to swine so inspection efforts can be concentrated on active facilities. The proposal would require cancellation of licenses issued to operators of swine garbage-treatment facilities that have not treated garbage for 3 consecutive months. This proposal was published in the March 20 Federal Register. Comments may be submitted until May 19 to Thomas O. Gessel, APHIS, USDA, Room 728, Fed. Bldg., Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

U.S. WEATHER OUTLOOK...USDA chief meteorologist Dr. Norton Strommen talks about the current weather outlook and how it's affecting the planting season as well as farmers' options about how to use their croplands this year. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (151)

DAIRY OUTLOOK...Both milk production and commercial use are expected to have large increases this year, but there are forces in motion that could mark 1986 as a turning point in the dairy industry. USDA economist Clifford Garman focuses on the current situation and outlook for dairy. Vic Powell interviews. (152)

TOBACCO OUTLOOK...Major changes are underway for tobacco producers that relate to acreage as well as the current deficit reduction bill. USDA economist Verner Grise examines these changes and how they will affect the tobacco industry. Vic Powell interviews. (153)

POLYETHYLENE WRAPPING FOR FRUITS...USDA scientist Phil Hale talks about research being conducted in Orlando, Florida, to protect and preserve the quality of fruits and vegetables using a film or polyethylene wrapping. Lynn Wyvill interviews. (154)

FARM CRISIS - MANAGING FOR TOMORROW...Larry Bitney, extension economist with the University of Nebraska, offers an overview of the farm crisis situation in Nebraska and programs underway in this area to help farm families cope with financial difficulties. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (155)



FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1504...This week Brenda Curtis gives us a chance to get to know the new Secretary of Agriculture as she presents "A Conversation with Richard Lyng."

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1493...USDA news highlights; Farm bill improvements; A visit with the new Ag. Secretary; Future insecticides; Debt struggle continues.

CONSUMER TIME #986...Electrocutions in the home; Drugs vs. food; Test tube plants; Trickle irrigation for your garden; Lemon laws.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...(This listing includes only scheduled reports, but our newslines carries new items every weekday regardless of the lack of scheduled USDA reports.) Tues, Apr. 8, Crop and weather update; Wed, Apr. 9, Land values summary; Thurs, Apr. 10, U.S. crop production, World ag. supply and demand, USSR grain outlook; Fri, Apr. 11, World crop production, World cotton situation, World oilseed situation. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

OFF MIKE

Marla Behrends (WKAN, Kankakee, IL) is in the Middle East and will be for six weeks. She was selected as a member of an all-female Rotary Foundation Group Study Exchange Team. She will be in Egypt and Bahrain and will stop by Brussels on her way home ... Another "Fantastic" offer. We have extra copies of the press kit provided to media during the Ag Day celebration at USDA. It's crammed with good information about agriculture, i.e. info sheets on how many jobs ag makes, one farmer feeds 116 people, how much food one person eats, eating out and eating in, what farm exports mean, one pound of wheat and 13 million jobs, and ag is more than food. If you want one of the kits, let us know ... Wey Simpson (KXLY, Spokane, WN) recently showed what years of experience can do. He anchored two half-hour daily newscasts as part of the media coverage efforts at the National Wheat Growers meeting in Reno. He taped interviews and gave live reports in each program and dazzled co-workers with his unflappability ... We missed getting this next item in last week's letter, so it's a little out of date. It's from Dan Modlin (Rural Radio Net, New Palestine, IN) who reports he got back from the airport, March 10, to find a tornado had missed his house by only about 150 yards. "Just three houses away looked like a bomb had gone off," was Dan's observation. And he verified that tornadoes can do quirkie things. His sons left a plastic beach ball in the backyard and it stayed there, despite all kinds of things flying around ... Remember Scott Erickson? He worked in our TV section a couple summers back. He writes to report he will be spending six months in Costa Rica helping the University there with its radio farm programs. Then he returns in December and will be looking for a job. We have his resume, if you're interested ... Latest newsletter from Bob Bosold (WAXX, Eau Claire, WI) reports he's on his annual Farm Tour to Hawaii. Three years in a row makes it an annual affair, doesn't it? Tough duty!



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